

1927

A Liberal Education

Henry Merritt Wriston

Follow this and additional works at: http://lux.lawrence.edu/addresses_commencement

© Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

Recommended Citation

Wriston, Henry Merritt, "A Liberal Education" (1927). *Commencement Addresses*. 3.
http://lux.lawrence.edu/addresses_commencement/3

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the University Archives at Lux. It has been accepted for inclusion in Commencement Addresses by an authorized administrator of Lux. For more information, please contact colette.brautigam@lawrence.edu.

A Liberal Education

Commencement address to the
Seniors of Lawrence College

1927

HENRY MERRITT WRISTON

President of Lawrence College

APPLETON, WISCONSIN

LAWRENCE COLLEGE BULLETIN

VOL. XXVII August 22, 1927 No. 10

The Bulletin is published semi-monthly at Appleton, Wisconsin, by the Board of Trustees of Lawrence College and entered at the post office at Appleton, Wisconsin, as second class matter, October 6, 1909, under act of July 16, 1894

A Liberal Education

YOU go out today with a degree from a college of the liberal arts. I want to discuss the significance of that fact. What have we sought to give you? What is the goal toward which your college course points?

Education is the process of discovering, and coming to appreciate, one's place in the universe,—in space, in time, in matter, and in society. "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die," is the counsel of those who know nothing of the past, and doubt the reality of the future. Life takes on meaning only as it is seen in terms of a great past and an infinite future. The pace at which we move, the objectives toward which we strive, will largely be determined by the experience of our predecessors, by the measure of their progress, and its accelerating rate.

It makes all the difference in the world to our lives that we are not living in the middle ages. If we are to appreciate the problems of our day and solve them, we must have the perspective on time that geology, history, and biology can give us. We must know something of the level from which we have sprung and of the pace of our physical, mental, and spiritual progress. Finding ourselves, in terms of time, lays the foundations for rational and successful approach to questions that would otherwise daunt and confuse us.

We must discover the place of our planet in the universe, and our own places in the world. Appreciation of space and distance and size throws our lives into a different perspective. The nature of our being must be analyzed and related to the substance of our environment. From the egocentric bliss of a life unconsciously emerging and apparently endless, and of a world encompassed by our own horizon, it is something of a shock to learn that we are constituted of common chemicals (not worth very much in the aggregate), infinitely transient in relation to time, incredibly small in relation to space, set amidst forces too tremendous for the mind of man fully to comprehend.

The sophomore conclusion is that we have no significance. "As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more." Yet all history,—the progress made in accommodating life to environment and harnessing nature to our service,—denies the hasty doctrine of pessimism and suggests that life gains in significance as we learn to work harmoniously with forces which we may not combat, but which we may learn to direct. Man has risen steadily toward mastery of space and matter and has made deep inroads upon time. The function of education is to advance us yet further toward mastery, to fill life's brief span ever more full of meaning.

The educative process must look, therefore, to the fullest development of the various means by which we receive accurate impressions and to the cultivation of skills by which we give effective expression to the resulting ideas. We must so sensitize our lives that we may catch and evaluate the facts of the world about and within us and at the same time build agencies through which we may make effective our impact upon the world about us and within us.

When the child is born the area of sensitiveness is small—neither sight nor hearing tell him much. The chief media of expression are vocal chords energized by vigorous lungs. If we had not experience with many babies before, we should be utterly discouraged—the potentialities seem hopelessly meager. Small children usually view new babies with a mixture of wonder and scorn. The successive steps by which sounds become meaningful, objects become suggestive of ideas, and our vocal manifestations become intelligible to other than doting parents, furnish an indication of the processes which must go on all our lives. Education seeks to find meaning in ever more and more various, delicate, and complicated sights and sounds and tastes and smells. In earliest childhood we have opened to us the wonders of our speech, and then, later, the treasures of its literature. If by reason of industry and will we progress to the mastery of "foreign" languages, we may come to appreciate the life and genius of our neighbors upon this crowded earth.

We may even learn special languages, as, for example, the symbols of science and mathematics. We may progress to an understanding of other sorts of sound, such as music, the special structure of which must be studied before appreciation is rounded and rich.

It is not essentially the shades of difference in the structure of ear and eye and mouth and throat which make the world so varied in its appeal to people,—nor even the structure of the brain. The difference is in the approach of each individual, in the cultivation of various sorts of sensitiveness. It is largely a matter of attention and effort. While it is true that we do not all have equal potentialities, it cannot be denied that the general level of our achievement of sensitiveness has risen beyond the dreams of earlier ages and may be increased beyond our present expectations. It took centuries for men to learn to write and to read; it took more centuries to add beauty and power to expression, to make shades and distinctions of meaning. Ages were required for the development of taste and capacity for great music, before rude rhythms became intricate harmonies. Today understanding and appreciation may come to youth, for it is part of our heritage. Yet if the matter be given no attention, it may all be lost in a single generation. A babe in the wilderness, who never heard a human voice or saw a printed page, who never heard a musical instrument, would become a savage. As by neglect we may depress the level of our capacity, so by attention we may sharpen our perceptions.

Yet in the face of these admitted facts, it is astonishing that most of us are content to work with blunt instruments. We are familiar with the tragic handicaps of those born blind or deaf or dumb, whose areas of sensitiveness are so greatly reduced, who must get what we get directly through a species of translation, if at all, and whose means of giving expression to thought, whether by sound or by manual effort, are so severely restricted. How infinitely greater in total extent and significance are the handicaps that indolence and carelessness lay upon us, who, having eyes, direct them discriminatingly only upon a pitifully limited range of objects; having ears, re-

Practical education, therefore, is not that which gives us bread to eat, and leaves us to learn social adaptation from hard experience, which nourishes our bodies and starves our minds, which makes us economically efficient and politically the tools of scheming bosses, which makes us machines rather than intelligent social forces. The thoroughly practical education is that which insists that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God. We live by every mood and expression of nature in all its myriad forms, by every advance and dream of science, by every phrase of beauty or emotional power in literature, by all the accumulated wisdom and experience of the race.

What is responsible for the generally ghastly architecture of our public buildings of a generation ago and the hideous monstrosities which we built for houses? Is it not that they were constructed by men who could make a living but had no taste, no sensitiveness to beauty, no aesthetic intelligence,—men who had so concentrated their efforts upon one phase of their development that another side was crippled? Many have left businesses which are monuments to talents improved, and buildings which are monuments to talents hid in a napkin.

Many of the ills of the political world and of the social order have arisen because men made business decisions solely with an eye to immediate profits, without seeing or understanding the remoter, the more permanent and significant consequences. Is that not the fundamental reason why the state began to interfere with business,—in order to compel men to consider the overlooked interests of society in the conduct of business which affected society? It was the carelessness of some of the railroads to larger public interests which brought upon them the shackling control of which they now complain. It was the wanton callousness of a few great corporations that brought the Sherman anti-trust act upon the statute books. Business is more than production and profit,—it is a force in the social and political and aesthetic life of the public, and it must be so envisaged. The more progressive and the most successful have learned that lesson and have set about to eliminate smoke and

noise and waste and dirt—and the thousand other vicious by-products which mar the benefits of the industrial revolution.

Many of the personal ills of men arise from the warped view of life as making a living. Efficient in business, there is no time for recreative activity and no taste for humor. There is no leisure for the contemplation of beauty in sight or sound. They lack resources to make life fruitful in a social sense, to make their lives of value to the body politic. Narrowly intent upon economic progress, they see home life go to wreck and ruin, the church becomes meaningless, the state appears a bottomless pit for taxes,—religion, politics, social life all seem dull or hostile. Art, music, literature, have no appeal,—and nerves, strung taut by concentrated interest, snap. Life, itself, becomes a burden.

Equipment for earning a living is not enough. Life must be conceived in broader terms. We should seek to lay up for ourselves treasures of the mind and of the spirit, a wealth of taste and appreciation, competence in thought and emotion, opulence in social effectiveness. We should think often of the enrichment of life—and give the phrase genuine content and meaning. Each of us knows many people rich in this world's goods, living poverty-stricken lives. They have fought to win prizes and have neglected gifts lying by the wayside. They have seized upon great purchasing power,—only to find that the things of greatest value cannot be bought. I do not mean that the exclusive pursuit of wealth is more destructive to a broad life than any other exclusive pursuit. A man may pursue a branch of learning or a special skill at the expense of neglect of family, to the neglect of a living, and come to old age in financial as well as domestic penury. He has made the same mistake of attempting to crowd the broad stream of life into a narrow channel. There is no wisdom in cultivating the mind and starving the spirit nor in developing emotion uncontrolled by intellect.

A proper conception of education recognizes that life has many phases, each with its own share of importance. Each is ministered to by a variety of means for recording impressions.

Each finds its fruition in an infinite number of forms and modes of expression. We should seek, through a lifetime of education, that essential balance and proportion which makes the whole of life a rounded and meaningful experience.

We all recognize this fact to a greater or less degree. Many people scoff at "mere culture," yet the yearning for what they suppose it to be is all but universal. This common desire is reflected in the advertisements that crowd our magazines with nostrums for the cure of social *gaucherie*, with patent medicines for the mind. Someone's scrap-book will put at your disposal the wit and wisdom of the ages, and assure social ease and conversational fluency. A memory system will let you remember everyone to whom you have ever been introduced and all you may have heard of his home, family, business,—and other vital matters! Books of etiquette will make gentlemen of boors and cads. And all these things have a tremendous sale. There is a strong element of tragedy in this commercial prostitution of a normal desire for culture, for an agreeable life, and for an intelligent intercourse with wise and sensible folk. The fact is that these things can not be bought for a price, nor donned like a garment. They are not ornaments and decorations, they are the stuff of life itself. Those who are persuaded by the advertisements fall into the error of attempting to substitute form for reality, sham for substance. The foundation of manners is laid in character; without gentility etiquette is meaningless. Second-hand wit and well-conned humor will never be an adequate substitute for the natural effervescence of a sparkling mind. Wisdom and urbanity cannot be applied to the exterior. They are no polished veneer to be laid over worm-eaten chestnut. They must be of the texture of life, sound clear through. They must be won by effort. Wisdom that is hollow is folly; urbanity that is veneer is insincerity.

This demand for breadth, you may say, is the counsel of perfection. 'The age is one of specialization. One cannot hope to be master of many fields; along that path lies the danger of becoming a dabbler and a dilettante,—jack of all trades, master of none. All knowledge is too great for comprehension. Each must slice off a small chunk for his own mastery.' There

is some truth in this,—but not much. The specialist is a compromise with necessity. His number is small. He may be compared to the pioneer who went out into the wilderness and opened up new country for the masses who were to follow. Or he may be described as one who takes a drill, and, boring through the wall of the unknown, undertakes thus to penetrate the secrets of our experience. Peering anxiously through the tiny aperture he has made, he tells us what he sees or suspects. Always he is in danger of narrowness of outlook. He has to point his drill too sharply for real breadth. Usually he tends to draw too many inferences from his new advance.

The number of specialists is few, and the places where narrow specialization is scientifically, socially, politically, and aesthetically safe, are many fewer than we have ordinarily suspected. It is no accident that the expert usually has amateurs set over him. It has long been recognized as a sound principle in government, in business, in education, and in most other fields, that there must be men of broad judgment but without specialized competence to integrate the opinion of the expert with the experience and lives of other people.

It is not true that men must take smaller segments of knowledge and may have fewer skills than in older and simpler days. Quite the reverse, for as knowledge has grown, so have the facilities for its acquisition, and its effective employment. We do not know how many fields we may master. Jules Verne spoke of a "thousand leagues under the sea." It was a wild flight of imagination; it has become a reality. Daedalus was a myth,—an aspiration; but his achievement, cast in other forms, is commonplace today. The magic carpet is a fable, but the Ford car is a reality so common as to be a joke,—indeed, we can never joke about a thing unless it be common. Men have strained their lungs to make a few more people hear, yet now a man's voice, pitched in an ordinary tone, flies about the earth and is heard by millions. We are conscious always of aspirations; sometimes we are ashamed of their boldness and call them fantasies. Yet steadily, as a race of men, we make our dreams come true. We find it easier for us as individuals to attain to a more diversified and a better-

rounded mastery. We do this with less of waste effort; not, indeed, with less of effort, but with less of waste.

What mature man would have expected, in his young childhood, to drive a locomotive over the highways at from thirty to fifty miles an hour? Who, as a child, would have thought he would ever be able to make a machine to send from the earth significant waves and translate them into audible sound reproducing the human voice? Yet we have learned to do these things and to understand how they are done. Thus, many mysteries become essentially simplified as we study them under new lamps of knowledge. We are held to know more than ever before, because the world demands it; and we may know more than ever before, because learning has been facilitated by those who prepare the way. The circle of man's competence has been steadily widening through the ages, and may be widened yet more through attention and effort.

We attribute to genius much that belongs to industry, and to talent much that belongs to effort. Each of us has some of the qualities of a poet. Whenever beauty stirs our emotions, be it the beauty of flower or sunset, there is the stuff of which poetry is made. The question is, does that feeling have enough depth and sincerity to make it worth preservation? If so, have we mastered the technique of translating our emotions into the form of thought and into the word structure which will reproduce for others both thought and emotion? Who has not seen a wild rose and casually admired its beauty? It took the skill of a MacDowell to put his observations into musical form, to charm all who have ears to hear. The moonlight is our steady companion, but the Moonlight Sonata would be quite beyond the reach of most of us. Those who give us compositions of that character have attained a sensitiveness of impression quite beyond a calloused stare, and they have developed modes of expression which reflect not only inherent taste and capacity, but which are the fruits of labor and striving for mastery. The apparent spontaneity of the poet and artist, of the musician and the literary man, of the scientist and the scholar, are, in truth, the fruition of struggle, the reward of years of devoted effort. We may call out from within us many

types of mastery, if only we care enough to do so. We should develop many skills, in as many fields as may be. We may not develop them all equally, but we may fairly develop them proportionately.

The attitude toward education of which I have been speaking is peculiarly necessary today, not alone for the sake of its effect upon individuals, but because of its social necessity. Our forefathers came into the wilderness and wrought for themselves a new nation. The problem of subsistence furnished them with so great a task that it took the major part of their attention and effort. Thus it happens that our progress in that respect has outrun our social and spiritual and aesthetic progress. It has outrun even our political competence. The uneven pull upon its component parts has rent the fabric of our life. We must now draw its strand together again and seek an even tension upon its warp and woof. We need a generation of people who will take the synthesis of life as their specialty, who will go out from college determined to integrate business and pleasure, ethics and efficiency, the home and the office, church and vocation, religion and life.

There is especial need for new synthetic effort in science. We have had a century of analysis and division. In the traditional American college the whole of science was comprehended under the term "natural philosophy." Through the process of analysis the subject was split up into chemistry, zoology, botany, geology, and physics, each for a time appearing to go its own separate way. The most fruitful work now being done is in tearing down the partitions between these sciences, in demonstrating their wonderful unity. The task is to reintegrate them and so make them at once more intelligible and more potent.

In international life there is the same need for a point of view more broad, more catholic, than ever before, for a method and an attitude dominated by the determination to link together many forces. Each interest group has sought to interpret the problems of international relations in its own terms. They have regarded their solutions, always and without excep-

tion over-simple ones, as adequate. In point of fact, coherent international life, which shall be peaceful in the broadest and most constructive sense, must take account of myriad forces which must be woven together with accuracy and gentleness. The military and naval groups have been inclined to think that fortifications and preparedness and warships and the like were the key to the situation: all else was ancillary. Another group has believed that judicial courts, outlawry of war, and political and legislative structures would furnish the solution. The scientist has come forward to assert that more important still are national resources, their distribution, and the magic which may be wrought by chemistry and physics in their exploitation and by substitution. The economist has laid his emphasis upon the channels of trade, upon balances and debts, upon agricultural resources, upon transportation systems. Still another group has held that mutual understanding of the habits and customs and languages of different peoples is more essential. Mere difference of language is a barrier to appreciation, and when that effect is heightened by differences in ethical systems, it seems as though these "foreigners" were not upon our level. Thus prejudice and bitterness and strife arise. In point of fact, the solution of our international problem requires not one thing, but all these of which I have spoken, and many more. All the intricate economic, cultural, social, political, and scientific forces must be brought into harmonious relationship. We may not hope to weave the tapestry of peace with one thread. International life today is imperilled and impoverished for want of breadth in the solution of its problems.

So it is with our domestic life. Slogans and shibboleths, traditions and practices, can never take the place of a broadly conceived and rounded approach to the problems of state. As long as we concentrate our attention, first upon the farmer, then upon the business man, then upon labor, and so deal with each group as though its interests were clashing with the interests of other groups, as long as we emphasize their rivalry rather than their complementary character and their fundamental community of interest, so long will we perpetuate the divisions.

No issue is more actively before us today than that of toleration. The attitude toward education for which I am pleading is the only foundation for real tolerance. Tolerance is genuine only when it involves comprehension. It may fairly be said that the range of our comprehension is the measure of our toleration. The so-called tolerance of the man who does not know, and does not care, is only slumbering prejudice. He may be pricked into caring at any moment by some irritation that attracts his notice. Then his ignorance becomes the measure of his intolerance and bigotry. An attitude of hospitality toward the point of view of others is as necessary in politics as in religion; in tastes as in opinion; it is as necessary of feelings as of thoughts. If, therefore, we are to be tolerant in any effective sense, it is necessary for us to have the widest acquaintance with the world and with men.

The cure for radicalism is perspective. The ultra-radical is a man who sees things out of focus, just as the modernist in art and in music has accented beyond their proper balance certain values which have always existed. The ultra-conservative, on the other hand, is one who, in like manner, selects certain facts as the basis for his thinking, and neglects to take into account others which should have their proportionate significance. Thus, the radical and the conservative op from essentially the same point of departure, namely, the refusal to take a view of the whole situation and to see it in all its bearings and relationships. The type of education which I am attempting to describe makes both impossible. The broader the point of view, the more one sees that there are balancing factors which make the radical's proposals for change too simple, and the conservative's insistence upon the *status quo* likewise too simple. Acquaintance with the progress of the human race as revealed in biology, the development of the world as seen in geology, the structure of the universe as envisaged in astronomy, and the advance of civilization as shown in history and the social sciences, brings one to a realization that progress is being made. It gives one a sense of the inevitability of change. At the same time, it shows in how far change may be stimulated and controlled, and in how far

it is inevitable and uncontrollable. This broader knowledge,—this wider angle of vision, this enlarged horizon,—operates as a cure for radicalism and as an antidote to stand-pattism.

I do not present this point of view in a spirit which mocks at economic progress, for I believe that breadth is of the greatest value for our economic advancement. How, in practice, do most people choose their vocations? A narrow range of information fits them for some restricted task. They fall into a groove, scarcely knowing what other possibilities there may be, never realizing their own potentialities. The meagerness of their interests is reflected in the narrowness of their tasks. The absence of intellectual independence is reflected in the routine character of their work. The narrowly trained person works in a groove, and chafes throughout life as the friction increases because the groove grows deeper. A broader vision sends imagination winging off to far horizons and opens for us new fields of interest and activity. Talent finds its fulfillment in tasks more in accord with our deepest interests. Our adjustments to the problems of life work become more natural and, consequently, more effective. The better adjusted worker makes the larger contribution to economic progress.

If ever you rise above the narrowly routine, you will have need of more than one kind of competence. The politician who would approach the portals of statesmanship in high office must be a political scientist; he must have the essentials of sociology and of psychology. He must have a grasp of history and the experience of mankind. He may even, in this faulty world, find himself, as Lincoln did, in a post where he must understand military matters. It is true that he may, and must, employ specialists, but he cannot be entirely dependent upon them. He must test their proposals with a broader view and with a ripper wisdom. He must fit their individual skills into the general organization of the state.

The teacher who rises above mediocrity must deal with a field wider than his own subject. For his illustrations he must levy tribute upon the wide world of fact, and thought, and

feeling. He must find significance where a less discerning eye sees no meaning at all. He must do much to suggest the unity of life. The business man who attains distinction faces many problems which seem at first sight to have but little connection with the particular trade or manufacturing enterprise with which he is associated. He may have to seek new sources of power, and study its conversion and transmission. It may be necessary for him to develop fresh sources and new kinds of raw material. He will find as much scope for imagination, and diverse information, and the play of broad intelligence in business as in any other enterprise. To whatever field we turn, therefore, breadth of interest, a wide range of information and training, are sources of power and marks of distinction.

Education, thus conceived, furnishes for us surer foundations of courage. The wider one's range of knowledge, the surer one's mastery, the broader his field of courage. Men of the jungle will face a wild beast without fear, for they understand his habits. They are accustomed to his ways and have learned to hold their own. But they will fall down in terror before an eclipse. It is the darkness that we fear. It is the unknown infection that we cannot fight. It is the thing we do not comprehend at which we lunge out aimlessly, and then stand in exhausted terror. The areas of fear in our lives are a fair measure of our ignorance. We can conquer those fields of terror only by understanding the forces with which we have to cope.

The function of the college is not to complete a process, but fairly to launch it. We have sought to induce you to test your capacities for impression and expression in many fields, to introduce you to a wide range of knowledge, and experience. These introductions are analogous to those of ordinary social intercourse. How many times a year do you say, "I am pleased to meet you"? Yet, unless that perfunctory courtesy is followed up with further contact, the introduction withers. Unless we cultivate the acquaintance it never flowers into friendship or ripens into loving service. Once affections spring up and is tried in the fire of adversity, years may pass between meetings, but the ties still hold. Understanding is still com-

fuse to attune them to any but a narrow range of sound; lips, yet give them only a few crude phrases to express the ideas that float across the focus of consciousness. We contract, thereby, the area of life. It is a species of partial suicide to which we devote all too little attention. We call it a crime for a man consciously to destroy all his powers, but pass the matter by with a shrug when he allows his most significant capacities to fall into atrophy.

The educational ideal we should set for our lives is to be forever busy at developing fresh fields and more exact standards of awareness, greater powers and better agencies for giving expression to our ideas.

We are always faced with the crass and vicious stupidity which contends that the one thing needful to know is how to fill the maw and so keep soul and body together. Some are running amuck with the notion that the man equipped to make a living is equipped for life. All reason and experience cry out against the fallacy. When we read that "life is more than meat and the body than raiment," we do not sufficiently grasp the profundity of its teaching.

This conception of life in terms of mere subsistence lays a blight upon the element we should cherish most dearly. Its false doctrine is built upon the premise that there are eight or ten important hours,—those during which you earn a living,—and that the rest of the time is wasted in leisure. It tends to neglect civic duty, social responsibility, and religious activity. It squeezes and narrows life into the rigid categories of work and play, eating and sleeping,—as though work should not be play, and play, work. It exalts the economic motive before all else. It emphasizes the getting of gain rather than its use. If school and college have achieved their aim, the education you have just begun will look to every phase of your activity all your life long. To regard it as now complete would be to destroy it. To regard it as applicable solely to economic profit would be to mutilate and cripple it. It is just as important to know how to live with your wife as to know how to support her; it is just as important to know how to interest your husband

as how to feed him. The man who is efficient in business, who is scientific, careful, patient, and intelligent economically, often throws up his hands at the problem of bringing up his own children, and abandons them to people he employs. He ends in heartbreak, because he attended to the less important rather than the more important thing.

Education, therefore, is a life-long enterprise, an effort to become socially, aesthetically, spiritually, economically, and intellectually effective in all life's relationships, using each moment of the brief allotted span for life's enrichment.

A narrow concept of education leads to gullibility. People with the misconceived education of practicality are often babes in the wood, outside the field of their special competence. I have in mind a man who would be regarded as a great leader in an important business known the country over. The war came and he was thrust into a position of responsibility. He was like a child. The shrewdness, the sagacity, the decisiveness, the intelligence with which his friends had been acquainted, were absent. He was a prey to notions, fears, superstitions, and propaganda that would have been laughable if the situation had been less serious.

A restricted notion of education endangers religious belief. Some new scientific fact seems utterly to destroy the foundations of faith. For some people the structure of religion falls in ruin, because it had too narrow a foundation. One old anchor lost, they have not learned to throw out new ones. They do not know how to use the new discovery in the reorientation of their thought. For others the new discovery seems impious, and they cling to religious belief through an agnostic attitude toward science.

We may observe the same phenomenon with reference to politics. Many people worship the Constitution of the United States, falling down before something which has developed far beyond the fetish of their dreams, worshipping things perfectly dead. They stand in fear and terror of change in a living organism, though the law of life is growth, and change is inevitable in any robust constitution.

plete. Life is still enriched by the reality of love. So with learning; this introduction that you have had in college must either go on to its fruition in comprehension and grasp and depth of understanding, or it becomes merely a faded leaf, tucked in an old book of memory.

Members of the class of 1927, I bid you farewell—with a feeling of pride and affection. As you go, I bid you cultivate sensitiveness to beauty and to truth in any and every form. Develop your capacity to do many things of many kinds. Live not only in the moment and for the moment. Live in the past, through history, literature, art. Thus you may vicariously share the experience of the past and give perspective to your wisdom. By faith you may to some extent live in the future. You may project forward the conclusions of experience, and by imagination, intelligently directed, envisage (even if dimly) the next steps of human progress. Thus life becomes more than the transient sensations of the fleeting moment,—it takes on breadth and depth and length undreamed of by most of us. Look out upon life not only through your own eyes, but with the eyes of a cloud of witnesses, and hear the voices of the wise and the gracious of all times.